

Christianity and Crisis

A Bi-Weekly Journal of Christian Opinion

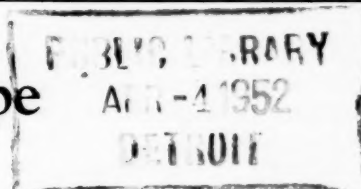
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Christian Hope

JOHN KNOX*



THE most striking thing about Paul's statement on faith, hope, and love in I Cor. 13:13 is not that he assigns to love the place of first importance, but that he includes hope at all as one of the supreme and indispensable three. If Paul is being inclusive in his description of the Christian life, we might expect him to mention also peace, joy, and patience or steadfastness as virtues or qualities which he often stresses. On the other hand, if he is being thoroughly analytical and means to be naming only the most basic, simple and essential elements, we might expect him to speak only of love and faith. But as a matter of fact, he sees hope as being also an irreducible and indispensable element. Peace rests on faith ("Being justified by faith we have peace with God") and patience rests on peace; and joy rests upon hope ("We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God"); hope itself has a more primary character and status. These *three* abide. It is as though Paul tried to reduce everything to love and faith, but failed. Hope remained undeniable and irreducible.

By hope, one hardly needs to say, Paul does not mean a general attitude of hopefulness or optimism, valuable as such an attitude may be; he means the confident expectation of eschatological blessedness or glory—the kingdom of God, the life everlasting. This hope, Paul says, is an absolutely essential element in the Christian life.

Now Paul's statement looks in two directions: on the one hand, it tells us (what has just been noted) that the hope of the life everlasting is an indispensable part of Christian experience (i.e., to be a Christian is to share this hope, to be in Christ is to stand with this hope); but it also tells us that Paul is not able simply to identify this hope with, or to

subsume it under, faith. Let us look briefly at both of these points.

First, the indispensability of this expectation. A few years ago it was the fashion to dismiss the eschatological hope of the New Testament and the Christian church throughout the centuries as non-essential and irrelevant, easily dispensable. More recently, and with much more understanding, we have taken the eschatological references seriously, but have tended to deny that they have a futuristic or temporal sense at all, interpreting them as being a graphic way of representing the depth, the mystery, the divine significance of our existence. The "life everlasting" becomes an allusion to a quality or dimension of our life within the present age—not to another life and another age. But although such an attempt at sublimation has value and truth, nevertheless in so far as it denies the actuality of the kingdom of God as a future order, it does violence not only to early Christianity but to Christianity throughout all the centuries. The eschatological expectation is implicit and essential.

But the second point is equally important: this expectation is hope; it is not faith. Paul says, "These three abide." This means, as we have seen, that we cannot reduce hope (with its indispensable future reference) to faith (which lays hold on a present reality); but it also means that we cannot so stretch or enlarge faith as to make it include the content of hope. In other words, faith is faith; and hope is hope. Faith is a response to the present and experienced being and love of God; hope is an assured future expectation. The author of Hebrews identified faith and hope (faith is defined as "the assurance of things hoped for"); but Paul does not make this identification (many of the illustrations in Hebrews 11 would have seemed to Paul to be instances of hope rather than of faith); and in keeping the two distinct he is nearer to the psychological and the theological

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realities. We *have faith* in God; we *hope* for the life everlasting.

In other words, the expectation of the future eschatological order, however indescribable it must necessarily be—this expectation is an indispensable element in the Christian life; but the expectation has the character of hope, not faith. It is sometimes said that if we could not believe in a blessed future immortality we should not be able to believe in God. I do not think this is a true account of our actual situation as Christians. True faith in God has always been able to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." The being of God and the actuality of a future fulfillment are not simple coordinates—the one is the object of faith and the other of hope; and faith and hope are not the same. Paul says that it is as inevitable that the Christian shall hope as that he shall believe. Hope abides, and will not be denied and cannot be dispensed with; it is as much a

part of the "given" in the Christian life as are love and faith; but it abides as hope, not faith. It may be an accident—but it is an accident that points toward truth—that the Nicene Creed ends in a slightly different way from the Apostle's: "I believe in one catholic and apostolic church; I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come." That is precisely our position. We "look for" the resurrection and the life of the world to come. We look for it confidently and joyously—but still we *look* for it. We do not actually grasp it or rather we are not actually grasped by it, as we are by the love of God in the act of faith. Hope is not faith; but hope is hope, and the Christian hope is intrinsic, essential, indefeasible, indomitable. The same God whom we know in faith inspires our hope. And now abideth faith, *hope*, love—these three.

The Buffalo Lay Conference*

CHARLES H. SEAVER

IN a recent issue of *Christianity and Crisis* (March 3rd) Dr. Van Dusen noted "three distinct, though related, purposes behind a laymen's revival" that is spreading through North America and Europe. These he described as (1) "to claim more general, convinced, and effective lay support for the churches in their programs," (2) "to assist laymen [that is, each other] in the problems and perplexities which confront them as they seek to live and work as Christians in their several occupations," and (3) "to encourage laymen to discharge their role as spokesmen for and agents of the Church within the life of society."

It was concern with the two latter objectives especially that prompted the calling of the North American Lay Conference on the Christian and His Daily Work by the National Council of Churches and the Canadian Council of Churches. It met at Buffalo February 21-24. There were three hundred six delegates and sixteen observers, appointed by the denominations. About eighty per cent were laymen

(including lay women)—employers and employees in business; lawyers, physicians, and teachers; farmers and housewives; public employees, journalists, etc. In geographical representation, a majority came from the eastern and midwestern states and the province of Ontario; but most of the southern states, the three Pacific Coast states, and such distant provinces as Saskatchewan and Newfoundland were represented. The Canadian delegates numbered fifty. Al Whitehouse of the Disciples of Christ, a United Steel Workers' official, was chairman of the Conference; Professor Ernest A. Dale of the Church of England in Canada and the University of Toronto, vice-chairman; Cameron P. Hall, administrative secretary.

The program provided six plenary sessions and five two-hour sessions for discussion groups—general and occupational. The ten general or mixed groups, to which all delegates were assigned regardless of occupations, had two sessions; the sixteen occupational groups, including also all the delegates, had three sessions. Four of the plenary sessions were devoted to addresses; one to discussion of the Conference Message; one to reports from the groups.

During the four days of the Conference the delegates were in plenary sessions, including services of worship and a Conference luncheon—sixteen or seventeen hours; in group discussions ten or eleven

* We are printing two statements about the North American Lay Conference because this Conference represents a new departure in American thinking about the layman's responsibility. Mr. Seaver, who writes the main article, was the secretary of the Conference. We are adding to it a brief comment by Mr. Bilheimer, who is program secretary of the World Council of Churches in North America, to compare this Conference with the laymen's movement which has developed in the recent years in Europe.

hours. There was, of course, participation by the audience in parts of the worship services led by W. J. Gallagher of Toronto; also in a two-hour plenary session Sunday morning. The delegates listened to twenty or twenty-one addresses of varying lengths. The question may be raised whether or not the delegates were so much addressed that they did not have a satisfactory amount of time for either group or plenary discussion. The planners of the Conference, recognizing that they were breaking relatively new ground, apparently believed that a good deal of keynoting was necessary; and obviously the group discussions were stimulated and aided by addresses reflecting different points of view on the main theme.

II

The Conference was given more than a North American setting by the participation of Dr. Hendrik Kraemer, director general of the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches at Bossey, Switzerland, and Dr. Reinold von Thadden of Fulda, Germany, lay leader of the *Kirchentag* program of the German Protestant Churches, also president of the Executive Committee of the Evangelical Church Congress and member of the World Council's Central Committee.

Dr. Kraemer made one of the brief opening addresses at the first plenary session, expressing the interest of the European members of the World Council in this Conference. He also spoke to an informally gathered group of delegates on religious conditions on the Continent. The other opening addresses were by Al Whitehouse, chairman of the Conference; Dr. William Barclay, president of the Canadian Council of Churches; and Dr. Samuel M. Cavert, general secretary of the National Council of Churches.

Dr. von Thadden, the speaker at the Conference luncheon, told the dramatic story of his imprisonment by Nazi authorities, during which nevertheless he found opportunities for a Christian witness, and of his post-war efforts to revive the Protestant Churches in Germany, especially through organization of the laity. The account of the amazing assemblage of vast numbers in various meetings—and literally hundreds of thousands in a single general conference—made a profound impression. Dr. von Thadden addressed the Conference also on the final day, and took a constructive part in some of the group sessions.

Another outstanding feature of the program was the address by Professor Robert L. Calhoun of Yale, in two installments, at the first morning and afternoon plenary sessions. In his interpretation of the Christian vocation he called in a "summons for the everyday worker in his work," which means not "an

obliteration of the distinctive functions that men must perform" but "a declaration that in whatever work a man is called to serve men and God he may recognize the voice of God and the appropriate place for his own answer—his work—the day's work, any ordinary, useful, worthy work as Christian vocation." This, he said, "is the heritage which has come to us . . . which in all sorts of ways has become obscured, corrupted, confused, but which in its central core of vitality seems to be unmistakable and inextinguishable. It is for us to realize, more clearly, more fully, more practically and effectively than any of our predecessors have yet done, the implications of this insight for the whole of human living. . . . If we can find our way to the right understanding of ourselves and our neighbors in this context, we shall have made genuine headway in overcoming that fragmentation of our thinking and our living which bedevils so much of our effort . . . in the intricate and exacting world in which we live. . . . At the level of the individual worker and his job there is need for a persistent effort to integrate what the individual worker does into an intelligently and willingly recognized work pattern"; also to integrate "work programs on a larger scale into a . . . conception . . . of the kind of social situation in which there is no longer—if there ever had been—the possibility of developing satisfying life for a restricted group at the expense of exploited neighbors whether near or far."

Several laymen addressed the second day's plenary session, preceding the first session of the occupational groups: Joseph W. Fichter of Ohio, a former master of his State Grange; William J. Grede of Wisconsin, a manufacturer and National Association of Manufacturers' president; J. Alfred Marquat of Pennsylvania, a former steelworker; Jerry Voorhis of Illinois, an ex-Congressman; and Horace M. Bond of Pennsylvania, a college president.

Mr. Fichter called attention to the difficult decisions that farmers must make, as stewards of the soil, producers of essential food, employers of labor, and dependents of an uncontrolled market. He defended their collective action and advocated preservation of the family farm. Mr. Grede deplored a trend toward collectivism as relieving men of individual responsibility and warned that loss of freedom would mean loss of creative opportunity. He commended this conference because "it is self-searching," which "is sometimes more difficult than planning how to make better Christians of others." Mr. Marquat told of his experience as a union member and officer, which he felt had made him a better Christian and a better civilian of his community. Mr. Voorhis saw in the rank and file of those who carry on our public work—postmen, clerks, teachers, researchers, foresters, firemen, etc.—reflection of the

standards of private occupations, including similar motivations. And amid the conflicting loyalties and influences with which Christian politicians must deal the choices and decisions are seldom easy or clear. In a democratic society compromises are unavoidable, for no group can expect to impose its complete will. Dr. Bond, speaking for the "professions," deplored the persistence of class consciousness as between professional and other workers, and the apparent dissociation of many professions from the concept of Christian vocation. Quoting a definition of "profession" as a term "now usually applied to an occupation considered socially superior to a trade or handicraft," he hoped we might in practice justify substituting "once" for "now usually." The profession of teaching he commended as at least without the faults of exclusiveness and gross disparities of income.

On the third day's plenary session two clergymen, a layman, and a lay woman—Dr. John Oliver Nelson of New Haven; Rev. William C. Berry of Toronto; J. Erwin Miller, a manufacturer, of Columbus, Indiana; and Mrs. Ella P. Stewart of Toledo—spoke on the topic, "How the Churches Can Help Their Members Understand and Practice Christian Vocation."

The first two speakers seemed to run into some difference of opinion as to the practice of Christianity "on the job." Dr. Nelson stated four characteristics of a job that is, or may be, also a Christian vocation; "worth while in society," taking "the best one has to offer of skill and will," not depersonalizing those with whom one has to deal, and offering opportunity for prayer. If the job doesn't meet these requirements, it was suggested, the Christian should either change it from within or get another. Dr. Berry was not sure that every kind of work can be a Christian vocation, though a person engaged in any kind of work one could bear a Christian witness. Jobs involving little or no creativity or responsibility have to be done, and we have to ask others to do work we would not do ourselves. Technology uses human beings for more or less mechanical functions, and has taken much of the individuality out of work. Dr. Berry would have the churches encourage the more clearly "vocational" workers to gather for consideration of their Christian vocation; also cultivate understanding with those workers in factory or shop whose opportunities for practicing Christian vocation there are limited but who may bear a Christian witness; and reach those others who "have no opportunity at all . . . for making their work a Christian vocation" and provide creative things for them to do in the increasing leisure time that shortening of working hours affords.

Mr. Miller, in a very significant address, pro-

ceeded to "examine some trees and stumps and roots" that "encumber the soil of the local church" and must be cleared away to permit "the planting and cultivating of the notion of Christian vocation." The minister who really believes in "the priesthood of all believers . . . preaches it not only with his lips but with his life. . . . His whole life will emphasize that he is one of us, not one apart from us . . . though the customs of the caste are designed to emphasize its separateness . . . in many subtle ways. . . . Each professional caste develops its own vocabulary incomprehensible to the layman. . . . Very few people are apt to go over the top shouting 'Hurrah for the eschatological implications of ecumenicity.' The caste practices and special vocabulary of the minister serve to . . . reinforce the idea that Christianity is a mystery preached on Sunday by professionals." Other stumps in the ministry are self-seeking, often but not always due to inadequate pay, and a certain tendency in the pulpit to "the elastic use of facts," encouraged by the customary absence of rebuttal and the worthiness of the goal.

But "most of the trees and stumps are to be found in our own [laymen's] ranks," Mr. Miller added. Lay church leaders are sometimes the businessman's "slipperiest customers. . . . Protestants' local leadership is often characterized by the businessman who thinks that the church should support business because business supports the church" or who "becomes a church leader because it's good for his business . . . and the members should trade with him . . . and by the pious reactionary who swings the heavy purse."

"The problem is not hopeless in any church where there can be found two men who in the great Christian phrase are repentant, conscious of a personally inadequate answer to the call of Christ, and determined to raise their own answer to the level of His call. . . . Now this does not mean the businessman who repents the sins of the labor leaders, nor the union man who repents the sins of business, nor the layman who repents the sins of the clergy, nor the clergy who repent the sins of the layman, but it means men who with sweat on their brows pray 'God have mercy on me, a sinner.' Such men already could help each other understand the meaning of the Christian vocation and support each other in its practice through normal encouragement, prayer, joint exploration and discussion. . . . If we can clear the ground by example I suspect we shall find the soil enormously fertile. . . .

"Consider the relief that many of us felt who served . . . in the last war; not that we had any love for war, but momentarily we felt a new dignity and a new worth in life because we were risking our lives and our loves for the first time in an occupation

not for our personal gain. Many of us have not been able to find the same dignity and worth in the daily work to which we returned. But, having known it in part, they will recognize its whole in the Christian vocation when they are confronted with examples."

III

Turning to the reports of the occupational groups, one is impressed by the seriousness with which these groups apparently took their assignments. These occupational group discussions were intended to be, and were, the most significant feature of the Conference. The groups were small enough for free individual participation, and yet represented a variety of viewpoints. The reports varied widely in organization and content, as did the discussions, but the purpose of exploratory self-analysis from a Christian viewpoint pervades them. It was not intended that solutions of the personal and group problems arising in the various occupations should emerge. Many of these problems, however, were brought out, with concrete illustrations from personal experience, for discussion of the attitudes and decisions involved, and agreement was often reached as to the Christian basis for dealing with them. Space forbids mention here of any of the numerous situations thus discussed, which will appear in the official reports to be published.

In the two sessions of the ten "general" groups (including the same delegates differently distributed), and also in meetings of the leaders of these groups, there was more or less discussion of both the general theme of the Conference and the extension of its influence. Dr. Paul M. Limbert, president of Springfield College, as chairman of group leaders, reported on available and potential resources for wider interpretation and dissemination of the views of work as Christian vocation presented at Buffalo.

The hope was expressed that members of the Conference returning to their own communities would discuss the procedure and proceedings of the conference there, while press and radio also would be used for the same purpose; that local or regional "little Buffalos" might be organized, sponsored by councils of churches, YMCAs, YWCAs, or individual churches; that institutes for lay leaders might be developed denominationally or interdenominationally; and that "vocational guidance" as provided in schools and colleges be supplemented by programs under church auspices in which the vital factor of religious motivation would be emphasized.

The "message" of the Conference was short and concise, as "from laymen to laymen." Much verbiage was slaughtered, along with many relevant ideas, in an effort for brevity and simplicity. The official reports of the Conference, however, will contain plenty

of supplementary material for those who wish it, available from the Department of Church and Economic Life of the National Council of Churches or from the Canadian Council of Churches.

Was the Buffalo Conference worth-while? The consensus of delegates seemed to be that it was. In a sense it was a four-days' "retreat" of more than three hundred Christian people, representing many denominations and engaged in a great variety of occupations, to consider together their Christian responsibilities in their daily work. Many spoke of new insights and new inspiration they had received. To the delegates at least the Conference was meaningful and helpful; it could become that also to a far wider circle.

The same delegates, or any large number of them, are not likely to meet again to carry on from the point where they left off—from exploration of problems toward agreement on Christian solutions. That is an inevitable shortcoming of such conferences; subsequent conferences on the same or a similar theme must begin over again. Yet the percolation of the results of a national or international conference intrinsically worth-while and the cumulative influence of successive conferences large and small that it may inspire do have an impact wider than can be measured—may start, or give needed impetus to, a far-reaching forward movement.

A Comparison With European Lay Movements

ROBERT S. BILHEIMER

THERE are on the whole three chief ways in which laymen express their Christian faith. All of the three presuppose a certain personal faith and the expression of that faith in personal morality. Beyond this, according to the first idea, laymen express their religion chiefly by working actively in their church. Second, in addition to working in their church, laymen carry their religion into the work they do day by day, but chiefly in terms of their own conduct on the job. Thirdly, laymen are so governed by Christianity that they not only work in the church and carry religious conceptions on to the job, but allow Christian convictions to guide and correct the very structure of the work which they do.

The first of these conceptions is that which governs the great body of American laymen. Encouraged by the organized work of the denominations as well as by the programs of the local churches, laymen on the whole see their chief function as Chris-

tians—beyond the maintenance of a good personal life—to be that of active workers in the church and its denomination of which they are members. The great task of the Christian is held to be that of “building up the Church” by which is meant strengthening the organized churches.

The third conception whereby laymen see it as their function to be so guided by Christian conceptions that they in turn begin to judge and provide the means of correction for the very structure of the work which people are called to do in society is a conception which has most forcefully been in evidence in Europe. Here the very function, for instance, of the law has been debated by Christian lawyers who have seen that it is not enough to conduct one's self as a respectable Christian within a structure which demands serious qualification of Christian conceptions. Accordingly, in this field as in many others, the framework and conditions and objectives of work itself in its many forms in modern society have been under rigid Christian scrutiny.

It was on the whole the second conception—that whereby laymen understand the need to carry Christian conceptions into the job and into their own conduct while on the job—that dominated the thinking of the recent Buffalo Conference. The Conference definitely saw that Christian lay responsibility extended far beyond the boundaries of organized church life. It spoke in terms of the relevance of Christianity to the daily work. In so doing, however, it was not so much inclined to raise questions about the requirements which the structure of work in modern industrial society itself lays down, but rather to speak of the Christian conduct of laymen within these already given requirements. In the discussion group of labor leaders, for example, there was a very good discussion about Christian responsibility in the conduct of the affairs of the union both as these pertained to the internal functions of the union as well as its relationships to management. There was also the recognition that by working in the union and thus helping to create better conditions in terms of wages, hours, and conditions on the job for people, laymen were making a Christian contribution. When, however, the question was raised concerning the bearing of Christian faith upon the policy of unions which are operating within an inflationary economy and which are largely dependent within that economy upon an armament program for their great prosperity, there was virtually no discussion at all. For whatever reason, these people were not willing or able to see the more far reaching implication of the vocation of the Christian. Beyond this, it should be added that on the whole, the discussions at Buffalo seemed to be predominantly individualistic. They were, that is, discussions which were conducted on the

basis of the individual applying Christian principles in his own work on the job. It was not so much true that there was a deep sense of the church operating powerfully in the world's work.

The Buffalo Conference thus contrasted sharply with prevailing American opinion and to this degree was a very distinct gain. Unquestionably, some lines of thought have been gathered up into a focus and others have been set in motion by the Buffalo Conference so that healthy changes may result in the current scene. On the other hand, the Buffalo Conference did not significantly raise the issues which have been so interestingly discussed in Europe. This is perhaps inevitably so. It is easier in Europe where the whole structure of things has undergone profound changes for other reasons for Christians to talk about the structure of work and to see the possibility of changing that structure. It is much more difficult for American Christians to envisage the possibility of any profound change in the structure of work in the United States. Nevertheless, one hopes that this deeper question will not be lost sight of and that the gains which were unmistakably registered by the Buffalo Conference will in successive work be broadened to run into these deeper channels.

The World Church: News and Notes

C.C.I.A. Issues Memorandum On U.N. Actions

New York (EPS)—A memorandum on actions by the Sixth Session of the United Nations General Assembly has been prepared by the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, 156 Fifth Ave., New York 10, N. Y. While the report makes no claim to be inclusive says a covering letter signed by Dr. O. Frederick Nolde, Director, it indicates the wide area of international problems to the solution of which the C.C.I.A. offers its contribution.

The letter continues: “The decisions reached at the Sixth Session of the General Assembly are not such as will in themselves immediately improve the international situation. Their effectiveness will depend in large measure upon a more favorable international climate and upon the ability of the major powers to work together more harmoniously. Considerable importance may be attached to the establishment of the Commission on the Reduction of Armaments, and also of the Peace Observation unit. Moreover, significant steps were taken in humanitarian areas such as those affecting refugees and in economic assistance.”

The memorandum includes the following topics: (1) Actions pertaining to International peace and security, (2) U. N. Commission to supervise German elections,

(3) Palestine, (4) Refugees, (5) Korea, (6) Economic development of underdeveloped countries, (7) Trust and non-self-governing territories, (8) South West Africa, (9) Indian minority in the Union of South Africa, (10) Repatriation of Greek children, (11) International covenant on human rights.

Christian Study Institute Set Up in India

Bangalore, India (RNS)—A Christian Institute for the Study of Society has been set up here under the auspices of the National Christian Council of India.

The council also is planning to establish a Christian Center of Research and Training for East Asia to complement the work of the institute.

Both the institute and the center will function on the campus of United Theological College here, which has offered the use of its facilities.

Both the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council are interested in the development of the two study projects which are outgrowths of visits here by representatives of these world organizations.

The institute was created as the result of a tour by Dr. John C. Bennett, of Union Theological Seminary in New York, on behalf of the International Missionary Council.

The center was proposed by Dr. Hendrik Kraemer, director of the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches, and the Rt. Rev. J. E. Lesslie Newbigin, Bishop in Mathurai of the Church of South India. Dr. Kraemer came to India last year to conduct laymen's institutes in several of the country's major centers.

Goal of the center, as recommended by Dr. Kraemer and Bishop Newbigin, would be to help India's churches train men and women as lay leaders for Christian service. It also would help these lay leaders understand the Christian message in relation to the present situation in Asia and train them in the art of living together as Christians.

Berlin Pastors Hit 'One-Party' Church Rule

Berlin (RNS)—Opposition to alleged "one-party" rule in the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKID) by the Confessional group led by Pastor Martin Niemöller was expressed here at a meeting of 200 pastors from the Berlin and Brandenburg area.

It was the first public meeting held by the Free Convent, an organization of Berlin-Brandenburg pastors which seeks "spiritual and organizational renovation" of the Evangelical Church. The organization claims a membership of about one-fifth of the pastors in the Berlin-Brandenburg area.

The Free Convent charges that a "radical" wing of the Confessional Church, represented by the Brethren Council, exercises control of EKID. Pastor Niemöller, president of the Evangelical Church of Hessen and Nassau and foreign secretary of the EKID Council, is considered the leader of the Confessional group.

During the meeting the "autocratic policies" of Pastor Niemöller were denounced. However, Dr. Borngaesser of Wiesbaden said that the crux of the controversy was "not the person of Pastor Niemöller but the church-political system and the theological concept he represents which threatens to destroy the dynamic of Evangelical thinking."

Charging that since 1945 "virtually all influential posts" in EKID had been held by members of the "radical" wing, he said that "it is the predominant power position of this group, under which as many as ten different posts are held by one member, that makes any genuine opposition impossible."

"It is unthinkable," he added, "that such a church can still call itself 'the Church of the Reformation.'"

Dr. Otto Dilschneider, Berlin theology professor, said that the majority of Evangelical pastors no longer felt it possible to justify Pastor Niemöller's position to their parish members. Since the war, he said, "a sort of cabinet government" has formed within EKID, turning "even the synods into instruments of church management," and imperilling the pastors' "rights of co-determination."

Pastor Niemöller's opposition to rearming West Germany on the ground that it would endanger German unification was criticized by Dr. Ferdinand Friedensburg, West Berlin Christian Democrat leader.

"Every Protestant Christian should approve a West German defense contribution," he said, "because it is the only way to keep the Communists from realizing their hope of bringing the whole of Germany under their control by military conquest."

Denmark's Catholic Paper Urges Change on King

Copenhagen (RNS)—Denmark's Catholic weekly, *Katolsk Ugeblad*, has urged the abolition of a constitutional provision that the King must be a member of the Danish State Lutheran Church.

A new national constitution is now being drafted by a special commission. The present Danish constitution stipulates that the King must be a member of the State Church.

Principal interest in the new charter centers around the matter of succession, since King Frederick IX has no male heirs, but other changes are known to be under consideration.

Katolsk Ugeblad urged that the Danish sovereign be "given a free hand" in the matter of his religion. It said that since no such stricture was imposed upon the heads of the various government ministries, the King was "worse off than any of his subjects."

Indonesian N.C.C. Has Commission of Missions

Djakarta, Indonesia (EPS)—At the Executive Committee meeting on the National Council of Churches in Indonesia, held in Djakarta, recently, a set of rules was adopted for the Commission of Missions.

The Constituting Convention of the National Council of Churches in May, 1950, recognized that the

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variations in missionary procedure made necessary a place where representatives of mission bodies and churches could meet to discuss, study and stimulate missionary activity in Indonesia. As the Convention did not desire to institute a Missionary Council apart from the Council of Churches, it provided for a Commission on Missions, integral to the Council of Churches.

A central Committee consisting of members of churches and of foreign mission bodies, the latter to be appointed by the Council of Churches in consultation with the foreign missionary bodies. Each of the member churches of the Council is entitled to appoint a member to serve in a liaison capacity

between their respective churches and the Central Committee. The Plenary Council shall be convened every two years, the Central Committee twice annually. The Secretariat is to be headed by an appointee of the Central Committee, two other secretaries, one for domestic, one for foreign matters to be appointed by the Plenary Council. It is expected that both the national churches and the mission bodies will contribute to the budget of the Commission.

Hungarian Lutherans Change Constitution of Church

Budapest, Hungary (NLC)—A new constitution for the Lutheran Church in Hungary has been drafted by its National Synod. Discussions at all levels preceding the synod here demanded a "more simple and economical" organization of the church, according to Hungarian Church Press, English-language news bulletin of the Protestant Churches in Hungary.

The old constitution, adopted in 1893 and revised in 1937, does not fit "the actual conditions and the regenerated spiritual life," according to the bulletin, which claims that since the liberation (by Communists) the 430,000 baptized members of the Lutheran Church in Hungary have witnessed "a very significant spiritual renewal."

The bulletin maintains that there has been "a growing demand in the congregations for changing of the obsolete and over-sized organization of the church," which "had all the surviving traits of the semi-feudal ruling system." The new draft, it said, has been prepared by consistories, presbyteries, pastors' fraternities, bishops' and inspectors' discussions, and "carries through, in a consequent manner, the Synodal-Presbyterian principle in the new organization."

The legislative synod, which convened early in February, was opened by Bishop Lazlo Dezser of the Montana district, government nominated successor to Bishop Lajos Ordass, imprisoned in late 1948 and released in early 1950.

"We could not pass new church laws if we were wavering in our love toward our country, if we were in doubts as to the new order of our state and the cause of peace," said Bishop Dezser in his opening sermon.

According to the bishop, it is the duty of the church to "perform full service in the Hungarian People's Republic, not by isolation in the Republic, but with reference to the Hungarian People's Republic." Dezser maintained that progress in the Lutheran Church in Hungary, has "become clarified and more realistic since the liberation," and claimed that "it has been with reference to this experience that we have loved, defended our country and its present order." He said the synod is "the outcome of the effort whereby we are finding our place and settling down in the new world." The new church laws, he said, would prove "that we cannot be shaken in this love of our country."

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